

**SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR AUTHORIZING, AUTHENTICATING
AND ACCOUNTING USERS HAVING TRANSPARENT COMPUTER
ACCESS TO A NETWORK USING A GATEWAY DEVICE**

ABSTRACT

A system and method for authorizing, authenticating and accounting users having transparent access to a destination network, wherein the users otherwise have access to a home network through home network settings resident on the user's computers, and wherein the users can access the destination network without altering the home network settings and without installing software on the user's computer. The system includes a gateway device for receiving a request from a user for access to the destination network, and means for identifying an attribute associated with the user based upon a packet received by the gateway device, wherein the packet is transmitted from the user's computer, and wherein the user's computer is configured for accessing the home network. The system also includes a user profile database comprising stored access information and in communication with the gateway device, wherein access information corresponding to the user is identified by the attribute associated with the user. Furthermore, the system includes an Authentication, Authorization and Accounting (AAA) server where the AAA server determines if user is entitled to access the destination network based upon the access information stored within the user profile database. The method of the invention includes receiving at a gateway device a request from a user for access to the destination network, identifying an attribute associated with the user based upon a packet received by the gateway device, wherein the packet is transmitted from the user's computer, and wherein the user computer remains configured for accessing the home network, and wherein no additional configuration software need be installed on the user computer. A user profile corresponding to the user and stored in a user profile database is accessed, where the user profile is accessed based upon the attribute associated with the user, and determination is made based upon the user profile as to whether the user is entitled to access the destination network.